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"TRUTH IS ONE, MEN CALL IT BY VARIOUS NAMES."
—RIG VEDA

VEDANTA QUARTERLY

Message of the East

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MESSAGE OF THE EAST

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."
—*Tyndall*

VOLUME XLVIII 1959 NUMBER 3

WHO IS A BRAHMANA?

from the Dhammapada

Stop the stream valiantly, drive away the desires, O Brahmana!* When you have understood the destruction of all that was made, you will understand that which was not made.

If the Brahmana has reached the other shore in both laws, in restraint and contemplation, all bonds vanish from him who has obtained knowledge.

He for whom there is neither the hither nor the further shore, nor both, him, the fearless and unshackled, I call indeed a Brahmana.

He who is thoughtful, blameless, settled, dutiful, without passions, and who has attained the highest end, him I call indeed a Brahmana.

The sun is bright by day, the moon shines by night, the warrior is bright in his armor, the Brahmana is bright in his meditation; but Buddha, the Awakened, is bright with splendor day and night.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who does not offend by body, word, or thought, and is controlled on these.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who, though he has committed no offence, endures reproach, stripes and bonds: who has endurance for his force, and strength for his army.

*Usually rendered **Brahmin** in English.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who does not cling to sensual pleasures, like water on a lotus leaf, like a mustard seed on the point of a needle.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who, even here, knows the end of his own suffering, has put down his burden, and is unshackled.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana whose knowledge is deep, who possesses wisdom, who knows the right way and the wrong, and has attained the highest end.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who is tolerant with the intolerant, mild with the violent, and free from greed among the greedy.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana from whom anger and hatred, pride and hypocrisy have dropped like a mustard seed from the point of a needle.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who has no interests, and when he has understood the truth, does not say, How, how? and who has reached the depth of the Immortal.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who has traversed this miry road, the impassable world, difficult to pass, and its vanity, who has gone through, and reached the other shore, is thoughtful, steadfast, free from doubts, free from attachment, and content.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who, having abandoned all longings, travels about without a home, and in whom all covetousness is extinct.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana who, after leaving all bondage to men, has risen above all bondage to the gods, and is free from all and every bondage.

Him I call indeed a Brahmana, the manly, the noble, the hero, the great sage, the conqueror, the indifferent, the accomplished, the awakened.

SELF-MASTERY

by Swami Paramananda

There are some wonderful passages that can be found in different scriptures which define various types of human beings who have risen above the afflictions of their earthly existence. It is not that they are unmolested by the world, for every living person feels life's pains and sorrows; but these by the superior qualities of their mind are able to remain high and impervious to the world's affliction and upheaval. They accomplish this not by becoming aggressive or exclusive or by cutting themselves off from humanity, but by calling forth from within themselves something which is strong and indomitable. These are the men whom we call masters—not because they gather around themselves disciples and followers but because they have overcome their lower propensities; because they have conquered themselves.

Gautama Buddha taught this to his disciples. He said that he indeed is a victor who has conquered himself. Man may vanquish thousands of enemies on the battlefield, yet he is not as great a conqueror as the one who has mastered himself. This is not mere imagination, for there are those who actually succeed in overcoming their lower nature, their passions and appetites; and they become like rocks. Winds may blow and storms may rage and all sorts of things may happen, yet they are able to maintain themselves in absolute tranquility. Contact with such an one can do more good in this world than any amount of preaching, for a man teaches by embodying the living qualities of ethical, moral and spiritual principles. Neither scriptures, nor teachers, neither theories nor dogmas, nor the loftiest of ideas

help until we become a part of the veritable Spirit. If a man wishes to help others he must first of all become subdued himself; he must be an active example of the qualities which he desires to convey to the world.

This is one of the great secrets in life, not only in regard to spiritual things but everything. We may try to make a child more perfect than we ourselves are by holding before him some beautiful ideal, yet we find that the child does not seem to respond to that which we are trying to impart. In order to be successful in our effort we must first make the concept of the ideal vivid through our own actions. It is easy enough to tell a person that he should not become angry, but it is much more difficult to prove by our own conduct that anger can be overcome, that envy can be conquered, that all petty reactions in life can be surmounted, and that one can truly follow the path of nonresistance and the footsteps of the great spiritual teachers.

The path of nonresistance is not, as many people imagine, an easy, weak, helpless path. In fact it requires all the inner strength that we can possibly summon. It demands all the strength of our mind, all the strength of our inner faculties, and above all it requires supreme faith in the Highest.

The gaining of self-mastery is a science. There are certain methods we can follow by which we are able to gain mastery over the body and mind; but we are neither safe nor are we absolutely certain of victory over the lower self until we have been conquered by our higher Self. We must lay everything at the feet of the Lord and learn to say, "Thy will be done!", not wavering in our purpose or asserting our own individual selfish will.

A weak person can never attain the real Self, that which is identical with God, the Absolute. And it is only when we have mastered the little self that the treasure really becomes our own for then we have earned it. It is not a matter of clinging to dogma or doctrine; that does not help us in our power of realization. We do not want a superficial acceptance of any religion; we want firsthand knowledge. We want mastery over ourselves and over the things of the world. It is never the aggressive man who finds himself; but the man who loses himself in the search for Truth.

In the world of matter we find that the man who is aggressive and who is constantly planning and scheming for his own prosperity, may gain for the time being, but in the spiritual world this is not true. He forfeits his rights. "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" This is the eternal challenge. How often we say these things; but we merely say them. If we really believed in them, if these ideals were the passion of our soul, then we would try to acquire them and master them. And when we have mastered them, what a wonderful benediction we can bring to ourselves and to humanity!

If we could but live with the ideal of loving even those who do not love us, conquering all hateful thoughts and feelings, then no matter where we might be thrown, nothing could overwhelm us. We would have something within ourselves that we could always call forth to sustain and fortify us; we could at all times maintain our balance, not by associating ourselves with the lower side of our nature, but by clinging more and more to the higher Self.

What is this Self? Certainly it is not confined to

the body, to name, form and all the external surroundings. It is something else. It springs from the Fountainhead of existence. Let us identify ourselves with that Source and become rulers in our own stronghold.

When we have once mastered ourselves, we do not use the power to conquer others for our own happiness and pleasure, but we go into the world with a heart full of humility. Our whole being is filled with the power of God. Gentleness and other virtues which are the attributes of the saviors and saints become ours. We may think that it is not possible for everyone to attain these wonderful ideals and ethics. This is a great mistake. We wrong ourselves by holding the mind in such a negative state. From the outset of our spiritual journey we must get rid of such ideas, because we do have the potentiality to accomplish everything. Of course, we may fail many times, and we will, especially if we are egotistic and self-centered. But when our heart is full of surrender, trust and a sense of dedication, we possess unlimited power to support and sustain us.

That may sound like a contradiction. How can a man be self-helping and at the same time surrender himself to God? In the highest light of philosophy there is no distinction between the One we call God and the One we call our real Self. They are identical. A man's real being springs from God, the Supreme, and until he has found That he is not truly in possession of himself.

One who has gained Infinitude by knowledge, by devotion and by actual contemplation does not shudder, nor does he shrink from anything. He has no fear; he has known the Self. One who has found God in the shrine of his own heart is not frightened by anything.

That is the first sign that he is a knower of Truth. He is not a talker but a doer; he is full of bliss and contentment, and it is because of this that he can give to others. When this happens to us, when we have found our true Self, we may say that we are verily the children of God, that through us He works, that through all our words, aspirations and actions — through everything — He is expressing Himself. However, before we can truly say this, what tremendous discipline we must put ourselves through! The animal must be humanized, and the human must be made divine. It is easy for a man to say, "Thy will be done," or "I and my Father are one," or as the Hindus say, "I am that absolute Truth." But words carry no conviction until we have found the things of the spirit, until we are imbued with them. And we cannot be imbued with them until they have become an absolute part of ourselves.

Religion is a matter of realization; it is knowing. There are many people who think it is not demonstrable, that it is something we cannot know as we know material things, and that we cannot lay our hands on God. But devotees say that we can; that if we have descended from that pure Source, then certainly we have the same purity within. If we believe that He is all-knowing, then surely we have a spark of that all-knowing power in ourselves. If we believe that He is inexhaustible and eternal, then we must be also the same. However, self-discipline is necessary; even self-denial is necessary. When we have formed certain harmful and injurious habits we will find it difficult to overcome them because of long usage.

The superman says it is unnatural to be hateful, arrogant and merciless; it is natural to be loving, kind

and compassionate, and the more we develop these qualities the happier we will be. Our happiness does not consist in having possessions. One might have all the wealth in the world and yet not be happy because of it. Conversely, unhappiness often results through worldly possessions and more often than not we feel the weight of them. God has given to all certain blessings and these unfold in a thousand manners as we learn to direct them through the proper channels. Also they shrink away from us when we do not know how to make the best use of them. We think that God has bestowed more upon some than upon others. But it is not God who does this; it is we ourselves who make His blessings either great or small. Through our own humble realization life becomes rich and abundant. Again it is through our own attitude that God's blessings become inaccessible to us. Unless our life is full of humility, unless it is ripe with understanding, it will be harsh and discordant. A barren tree is stiff and unyielding, but a fruitful tree bends its head because it is productive, because it has something to give. Same way it is with human life. The more we have within us, the better able we are to lend our aid to the need of humanity. When we have gained mastery over ourselves, subdued the lower tendencies and when we are no more haunted by fleshly desires, having dedicated ourselves to greater things and having permitted the higher Self to take possession of us, then only have we reached that point where we are safe. Only then, having found our home in God, in Truth do we know rest and peace eternal.

India has evolved a science for reaching this goal; it is the science of self-mastery. We are told by spiritual

teachers that we can master ourselves by overcoming all imperfections, weaknesses and iniquities. But we must be optimistic, full of hope, and courageous. If the task seems difficult we should remember that all is possible through God's help. No one can save us if we permit ourselves to sink into despair and despondency. Hindu teaching does not encourage negation, although people often identify it in this manner. The reason they do so is because we emphasize contemplative life. None the less, contemplation is a very important part of Vedanta. What we learn during periods of quietude is put into practice. And its effects endure.

Life should be the fruit of deep inner conviction, for until we learn to subdue the lower nature, until we lay everything upon the altar of God or Truth, we are scattered and we have no power over ourselves. We must unite the forces of body, mind and emotions until our whole being has become homogeneous. Then misery, restlessness, nervousness and all other distracting conditions which we undergo disappear as we place ourselves under the guidance of that supreme One. When this objective is attained, then indeed have we found our real Self.

Until we realize the Truth, whatever we have to give to the world is of little value. That is why the Indo-Aryans, the Greeks, the mystics and seers everywhere recognized that their first duty was to know the Self. It does not matter what our faith is or to what creed we subscribe; the vital thing is to make spiritual life a part of our daily activities, to let our ideals manifest through every thought and action, great and small; to bring God into every sphere of our life. Let the animal in us be humanized through service and contemplation;

and let our human self, the man, attain the vision of the Supreme. When a man has succeeded in achieving this realization, life will no longer be a burden, and all the haunting fears will vanish. Then he will consider it a privilege to live and serve.

When real spiritual aspiration fills our heart with love, with nobility and with all that pertains to the great Absolute, we partake of the qualities that abide in Him and can never again fail in our service to God or humanity. Because we have been touched by the Power that resides within, we are able to give just by being, by our very life in all its expression. We have become masters and truly children of God.

KINSHIP OF IDEALS

They are on the way to truth who apprehend God by means of the divine, Light by the light. —*Philo.*

God expects but one thing of you, and that is that you should come out of yourself in so far as you are a created being and let God be God in you. —*Eckhart.*

The difference between a good and a bad man does not lie in this, that the one wills that which is good and the other does not, but solely in this, that the one concurs with the living inspiring spirit of God within him, and the other resists it, and can be chargeable with evil only because he resists it. —*William Law*

Citizens of two realms, we all must sustain a dual allegiance: we sense the ineffable in one realm, we name and exploit reality in another. Between the two we set up a system of references, but we can never fill the gap. They are as far and as close to each other as time and calendar, as violin and melody, as life and what lies beyond the last breath.

—*Abraham Joshua Heschel*

HOLINESS IS POWER

by Srimati Gayatri Devi

That person who has renounced all visible creatures and in whom God performs his will completely—that person is both God and man. His body is so completely penetrated with divine light and with the sole essence which is of God that he can properly be called a divine man. For this reason, my children, be kind to these men, for they are strangers and aliens in the world. Those who wish to come to God have only to model their lives after these men. No one can know them unless he has within him the same light—the light of Truth.

These are the words of Meister Eckhart, the German Christian mystic, whose enlightenment was not wholly understood or appreciated in his lifetime. How can we deny that he speaks the truth—truth as he himself has known and experienced it? If we take his utterance at its face value, we cannot escape the fact that we should bow down before such men and worship them. If man can become God, then, as God, does he not deserve the acknowledgment of other men? Here is a question that has a different connotation for most of us. Many among us feel a bit repulsed at the very idea of bowing down before any man — for the simple reason that within us there has not yet been that awakening, the revealing of that light by which, as Eckhart says, we can recognize the light in another man.

Holiness is power. I have turned to this passage of Meister Eckhart to get a definition of holiness. Can you define holiness? Who is holy? What is a holy man, a holy person? You will have to think, not superficially but really deeply, before you can give an answer that

will be satisfactory to yourself, let alone to other people who might ask such a question of you. Whom could you call holy? What qualities make one holy? Such inquiry will start an investigation within you.

Naturally it is in the realm of religion that we expect to find holiness — not in abstract form, but in its tangible expression. And tangible expression of holiness is to be found in man; is it not so? Vedanta, as a philosophy, proclaims that all existence is divine in the truest sense, because existence in its entirety is nothing other than the manifestation or the projection of the Divine. If we think of holiness as being an expression of the Divine, then we could say that all is holy: man is holy, animals are holy, the plant kingdom is holy. Yet this is not the way we analyze. We set our own standard of values. We attribute many virtues and qualities to man because man is capable of expressing those virtues and qualities; in fact he does so. It is as man that we have the comprehension and understanding of what holiness is, and it is in man that we find this expression; therefore, in our analysis to discover a definition of holiness, we turn to man. To what kind of man? Meister Eckhart describes him as, "That person who has renounced all visible creatures and in whom God performs His will completely," and he says of him that his body is completely penetrated with divine light. If you take these as the earmarks of holiness, then perhaps you will come — in your own experience and contact with human beings — upon some degree of holiness.

I repeat at this point that we seek this quality in a certain area of our life. In the world, engaged in the pursuit of happiness, man is so busy with personal interests, with drives to satisfy his hungers and thirsts,

so wrapped up in himself and his material existence that it would be difficult to find holiness. Therefore, we do not look for holiness in the world. But there are worlds within worlds. Do not forget there is an inner world circumscribed by the outer. So if we can find access to the inner worlds of men, then perhaps we will make our discovery. Holiness is not really outside our world because man is not outside our world. We inhabit this planet; it is our kingdom — the kingdom of earth to the materialist, the kingdom of heaven to the devotee. Man lives in the world and he creates his own world. This is his heaven, and it can be his hell; that too is part of the world. All is here. Therefore, to seek that which we are aiming to comprehend, we need not go outside the boundary of our own existence; nor need we go outside the limit of our own environment. What we seek is here and now. Thus — if it interests any of us — by seeking we also find.

We mention religion because it is religion in action, religion in man's own life, that will bring holiness to our attention. We look for holiness in the man who is really religious. Here again we have to pause and think: Who is truly religious? Is it the one who faithfully pays his dues to his religious organization or steadfastly attends the sermons, or who does his duty toward his accepted affiliation? Can a religious person be completely defined by his outer activities? No. We have to recognize the religious in his inner world and not by the way he fulfills his external obligations. When a man has made in his life some place for his God, when he is not so busy playing with what God has given him as to forget Him completely, then we can say he has in some measure become a true religious.

There is a deeper side to all religious faith. We, as human beings, have our shallowness and we also have great depth. It is out of this depth that our potentialities are revealed. When we study the religious history of the world, it becomes sadly evident that many men threw their opportunities away by merely being administrators and organizational heads. Many of them had no time to think of their God. Tremendous potential energy was expended in their absorption with the affairs of the kingdom. That part of Shakespeare's *Henry The Eighth* is so very impressive when Cardinal Wolsey, in a moment of utter humility, acknowledges his own failure: "Oh Cromwell, Cromwell! Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my king, He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies." He speaks thus because what was he but a powerful political figure, when he could have been a God-anointed holy man!

The whole point of the illustration is this: The truly religious is more concerned with the cultivation of holiness than with the administration of the state or the church. He is more concerned with his God, with his own relationship to God, than he is with God's gifts — which may fill his life to overflowing. So, even in our search for holiness in the field of religion, we have to look to the man who is involved in the practice of religion, and look even beyond him, for not everyone who enters upon the religious path becomes holy.

In the world of men there are emblems of affiliation and faith that we place upon ourselves. If one belongs to the Masonic Order he has a pin; if he belongs to a certain club he has a badge. Likewise in the monastic orders some wear tunics and cowls, some wear robes,

some shave their heads. In India some holy men wear nothing, they are nudists. Such people are not faddists. This is done in order that they may free themselves of the consciousness of their bodies — so they will have no sense of shyness. That is the motive for all such practices, and these men do not belong to colonies; they belong to religion. Some holy men wear just a loin cloth, others carry a staff, some besmear their bodies with ashes, some have marks upon their forehead — all to remind themselves of their way of life, of their religious faith. It is true that all these externals of religion may help. Still, a tunic, a habit or a cowl does not necessarily make a man holy. In the world where people do not make any claims to holiness, they dress just like other people. But if they have acquired some degree of holiness, it does not matter whether they wear a garb of renunciation or not, for holiness is the emanating spirit; it is the manifestation of that which is still unmanifested in most human beings.

Shall we go back to Meister Eckhart? ". . . that person is both God and man . . . he can properly be called a divine man." The man of which he speaks is both human and divine. Throughout the world there is no lack of real goodness. Human beings are intrinsically good. They have the capacity for nobility, unselfishness, self-sacrifice, for giving of themselves out of love for one another. Therefore let us not belittle man at any time. He is possessed of potentialities, and he does express those potentialities of his being in a very great measure. But an unselfish man, a good man, a kind and noble man is still not a holy man in the truest sense. A holy man is he who is good, kind, noble, and unselfish — plus. We have to put a plus sign beside him.

Plus what? Plus his God-awareness, truth-awareness, life-awareness — life in its purest meaning and significance. A man cannot become holy, and become powerful and pure in his holiness, simply by being good, kind and noble. He has to have that awareness which will open for him the passage between him and his Creator. There should be no barrier between him and the Power that resides in him in order for that Power to reside fully and completely without any obstruction or interference.

The holy man is holy, whether in India, Germany, England or South America. Whether he is behind monastery walls keeping silence or in the pulpit giving his message of God, he is the same. In him "God performs His will completely." Most of us are not altogether holy, because something has happened to us; there is obstruction between us and God. We do not perform God's will completely. Why? Let us be honest, and humble in our honesty: We do not want to fulfill God's will all of the time. It interferes too much with our personal desires. It is too painful. We want the things and circumstances that make us happy, that can give us satisfaction. Life is so full of ordeal and sorrow. To do God's bidding would only add to our sorrow. If we are honest — whether superficially or deeply religious — we have to admit this and say, "The impediment exists because I do not want to perform God's will wholly. I would like to, but not right now."

Here is the answer to our question. We can be holy, and if we are not it is because surrender has not taken place. Our degree of holiness is determined by that. There are those, and they are rare human beings, who have achieved a degree of surrender of their self, their

will, their life and power, of their all, to the divine Power. Those who have gained this are on the path of holiness. That which we are able to express only partially comes forth in them in fuller measure. It depends upon the capacity to immerse oneself in Godhead.

This is a bit of simplification which I believe is necessary if religion is to be really fruitful in our personal life. Instead of just saying we are children of God or are made in the image of God, we should aim at being That. This is what we must do. We are God's children. Who can deny us that claim? We are made in His image. That is a fact, and no power is going to deprive us of our birthright. But our responsibility does not even begin by knowing this. It must begin by our making of ourselves true sons of God.

We say Christ was holy, his apostles were holy, the saints were holy. Saints were also human beings, do not forget, like you and me. And the apostles, if history has given us the facts, were far from perfect when they took shelter in Jesus. If they became saints, it is not because the church canonized them. It is because they manifested sainthood in their lives. No organizational acknowledgment can enhance a man if he is not enhanced by the expression of the power God has given him. No diploma or certificate or material document of any kind is necessary to prove a man's real greatness. He is powerful and great in his own right because the supreme Power resides in him. If he can to the highest degree eliminate his own sense of personality which is involved in his little ego, if he can bring into his life the play of the Power which is the home and storehouse of his own existence, then he eventually becomes God — and remains at the same time a human being. Only such

persons have real power, the power of good, of healing, of restoration in a world where destructiveness and evil play their part. They have the power of holiness.

The light, the power in man performs two functions. By itself it can reveal only externals. By that light one can do much that is beneficial for mankind, as well as much that is harmful. But that same light when united with the Source of light loses all of its capacity to harm or wound. That is why the influence of the holy man is different from that of the potentate who is filled with self and self-glory, who commands, demands, rules and imposes. And that is why the man who has transformed all his potentialities, glorified them by his awareness of Who it is that dwells in him and grants him power, becomes a real benefactor of mankind. The great power that flowed from Jesus could do no harm. It healed and soothed and sustained; it built men's faith in Reality; it gave courage and happiness, and it brought salvation in the truest sense.

In some religions God is spoken of as Truth. For instance let us take Buddhism; in a sense it is considered atheistic. Buddha never spoke of God. He preached a life of utmost selflessness, of the practice of holiness and renunciation, of the loss of self in Truth. It produces the same result. It makes no difference whether you are studying Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity or Judaism — one or all. If you can stay on a straight line and not be distracted by nonessentials, you will come to discover the real truth: All religion teaches the practice of holiness. That we cannot follow is not the fault of religion, though some say, "Oh, well, he could not progress very much because he had an inferior faith." This is man's prejudice, ignorance and shortsightedness.

Religion comes to us through such personalities as Krishna and Rama, as Ramakrishna and Christ, as Buddha and Saint Francis, each proclaiming the value of the same truth in the life of man.

Sri Ramakrishna has said: "How can we recognize a truly holy man? He is truly holy whose heart and soul are wholly dedicated to God. The holy man is he who has renounced lust and gold. He thinks constantly of God and serves all creatures, knowing that He resides in all. These are the general traits of the holy."

And Buddha said, "Better than sovereignty over earth, better than birth into heaven, better than lordship over all the world is the reward of entering the stream of holiness."

While from Zoroaster we have, "Holiness is good. It is the best of all good. Holiness is happiness. Happiness is due to him who believes in holiness. The law of the Lord is the law of holiness."

Is there any difference between these various thoughts? This is what we must seek in our own pursuit of religion. It is not the pursuit of happiness only; it is the pursuit of truth. Deep inside of each human being is that hunger and thirst for knowledge, and for God—the source of all knowledge. If we are seekers, we are also lovers—of truth and of God. With this begins the life of religion in actual practice. Everybody can be holy. We do not have to enter a monastery or put on a habit, nor do we have to say certain liturgies and formulated prayers. What we have to do is to remove all the obstacles on that passage which unites us with our indwelling Maker. For God is the holiness in us, in man, in all. Therefore we must seek Him in our own personal life—not merely outside, but within ourselves—because that

is where He dwells, and there we shall find happiness.

Meister Eckhart speaks of the body of the holy person as being completely penetrated with light. In India this is what we expect of a holy man. We judge him by the light he radiates and not by the measure of his scriptural study, not by his intellectual brilliance, nor by his eloquence. None of these can be considered the mark of holiness. The question we ask is: Does he shine? The truly holy man always shines as his body is penetrated with light.

"Those who wish to come to God have only to model their lives after these men." Meister Eckhart does not advise that we merely enhance our interest in the externals of religion, but he does advocate that we model our life after the holy. This is Christian; this is Hindu; this is Buddhist and Zoroastrian as well; this is the essence of all religion. If we want holiness, if we want to be a real expression of God, then our life must follow the pattern of all patterns, the pattern of the Perfect.

What model of perfection we choose really does not matter. If Christ is our ideal, let us remain a devotee of Christ and be a true Christian. If Buddha attracts our heart, then let us follow the spirit of Buddha, the awakened one to whom Truth was revealed. We must copy not the outer aspects of a holy life, but the inner qualities of spiritual beings. Then our love, compassion and awareness of Truth will increase gradually until, one day we reach the pinnacle of our ideal.

This is possible only when we are willing to adopt certain religious practices in order to help ourselves to advance spiritually. We need what is called *sadhana,* the disciplines that are indispensable for the cultivation of holiness. It can be done anywhere if the heart is set

upon the right goal, if the direction of mind is toward the Highest. Holiness can be developed by degrees. There are those who aspire to be holy, but become caught in the realm of the intellect. They are sincere, but their intellect, mighty though it be, acts as a hindrance on the spiritual path. In the Bhagavad-Gita we read: "Who is ever content and meditative, self-subjugated and possessed with firm conviction, with mind and intellect dedicated to Me, he who is thus devoted to Me is dear to Me." When all the faculties of our heart, mind and intellect, become consecrated to the Supreme, then we progress quickly toward holiness.

In this same scripture, Sri Krishna says, ". . . being absorbed in Me and taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of wisdom, many have attained My Being." This gives us encouragement; if many have attained their true state and stature, then we cannot fail, because we are the many. Sustained by true religious aspirations and strengthened by faith in ourselves, we will ultimately arrive at our goal. Then, out of our personal lives, will come the emanation of that of which Sri Krishna, Christ, Sri Ramakrishna and Meister Eckhart speak. Our bodies will be full of light, and our eyes will become single.

God is the focus of our life. When we find that focal point in our own consciousness and allow the stream of our light — through heart, mind and intellect — to be fixed there, then we shall come into our own. We shall attain not only holiness, but with it the power, the indispensable, unmistakable, inseparable power, which will enable us to lift others to the realm of the holy.

Faith is enlightened hope. —Longfellow

MASTER AND DISCIPLE

*from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna**

It was almost dusk. The Master and M. stood talking alone near the door on the southwest veranda.

MASTER (to M.): The mind of the Yogi is always fixed on God, always absorbed in the Self. You can recognize such a man by merely looking at him. His eyes are wide open, with an aimless look, like the eyes of the mother bird hatching her eggs. Her entire mind is fixed on the eggs, and there is a vacant look in her eyes. Can you show me such a picture?

M.: I shall try to get one.

As evening came on, the temples were lighted up. Sri Ramakrishna was seated on his small couch, meditating on the Divine Mother. Then he chanted the names of God. Incense was burnt in the room where an oil lamp had been lighted. Sounds of conch shells and gongs came floating on the air as the evening worship began in the temple of Kali. The light of the moon flooded all the quarters. The Master again spoke to M.

MASTER: Perform your duties in an unselfish spirit. The work that Vidyasagar is engaged in is very good. Always try to perform your duties without desiring any result.

M.: Yes sir. But may I know if one can realize God while performing one's duties?

MASTER: All, without exception, perform work. Even to chant God's name and glories is work, as is the meditation of the non-dualist on "I am He." Breathing is also an activity. There is no way of renouncing work altogether. So do your work but surrender the result to God.

*Translated by Swami Nikhilananda.

M.: Sir, may I make an effort to earn more money?

MASTER: It is permissible to do so to maintain a religious family. You may try to increase your income, but in an honest way. The goal of life is not the earning of money, but the service of God. Money is not harmful if it is devoted to the service of God.

M.: How long should a man feel obliged to do his duty toward his wife and children?

MASTER: As long as they feel pinched for food and clothing. But one need not take the responsibility of a son when he is able to support himself. When the young fledgling learns to pick its own food, its mother pecks it if it comes to her for food.

M.: How long must one do one's duty?

MASTER: The blossom drops off when the fruit appears. One doesn't have to do one's duty after the attainment of God, nor does one feel like doing it then. As you advance nearer and nearer to God, He will reduce your activities little by little. Have no fear.

Finish the few duties you have at hand, and then you will have peace.

M.: Sir, what is the meaning of the realization of God . . . God-vision? How does one attain it?

MASTER: According to the Vaishnavas, the aspirants and the seers of God may be divided into different classes: the beginners, those struggling to see God, the perfected ones, and the supremely perfect. He who has just set foot on the path may be called a beginner. He who has for some time been practicing spiritual disciplines, such as worship, japa, meditation, and the chanting of God's name and glories, is called a struggling soul. He is a perfected soul who has known from his inner experience that God exists. An analogy is

given in Vedanta to explain this. The master of the house is asleep in a dark room. Someone is groping in the darkness to find him. He touches the couch and says, "No, it is not he." He touches the window and says, "No, it is not he." He touches the door and says, "No, it is not he." This is known in Vedanta as the process of "Neti, neti," "Not this, not this." At last his hand touches the master's body and he exclaims, "Here he is!" In other words, he is now conscious of the "existence" of the master. He has found him, but he doesn't yet know him intimately.

There is another type, known as the supremely perfect. It is quite a different thing when one talks to the master intimately, when one knows God very intimately through love and devotion. A perfected soul has undoubtedly attained God, but the supremely perfect has known God very intimately.

M.: When one sees God, does one see Him with these eyes?

MASTER: God cannot be seen with these physical eyes. In the course of spiritual discipline one gets a "love body," endowed with "love eyes," "love ears," and so on. One sees God with those "love eyes." One hears the voice of God with those "love ears."

But this is not possible without intense love of God. One sees God alone everywhere when one loves Him with great intensity. It is like a person with jaundice, who sees everything yellow. Then one feels, "I am verily He."

One who thinks of God day and night beholds Him everywhere. It is like a man's seeing flames on all sides after he has gazed fixedly at one flame for some time.

"But that isn't the real flame," flashed through M's mind.

Sri Ramakrishna, who could read a man's inmost thought, said, "One doesn't lose consciousness by thinking of Him who is all Spirit, all Consciousness. Shivanath once remarked that too much thinking about God confounds the brain. Thereupon I said to him, 'How can one become unconscious by thinking of Consciousness?' "

M.: Yes sir, I realize that. It isn't like thinking of an unreal object. How can a man lose his intelligence if he always fixes his mind on Him whose very nature is eternal Intelligence?

MASTER (with pleasure): It is through God's grace that you have understood that. The doubts of the mind will not disappear without His grace. Doubts do not disappear without Self-realization.

But one need not fear anything if one has received God's grace. A man does not have to suffer any more if God, in His grace, removes his doubts and reveals Himself to him. But this grace descends upon him only after he has prayed to God with intense yearning of heart and practiced spiritual discipline. The mother feels compassion for her child when she sees him running about breathlessly. She has been hiding herself; now she appears before the child.

"Why should God make us run about?" thought M.

Immediately Sri Ramakrishna said, "It is His will that we should run about a little. It is great fun. God has created the world in play, as it were. This is called Mahamaya, the Great Illusion. Therefore one must take refuge in the Divine Mother, the Cosmic Power Itself. It is She who has bound us with the shackles of illusion. The realization of God is possible only when those shackles are severed."

THE RULER WITHIN

by Sister Daya

Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself and he alone is the enemy of himself. He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy like an external foe. —Bhagavad-Gita

We can conceive of no legitimate activity in life in which man seeks to become proficient, where self-control will not lead him to higher reaches on his path. It does not really matter whether our pursuit be ethical or religious, we all agree that self-control is of utmost importance. All education, no matter what the field, should make it a significant part of its teaching. I remember a little saying I learned in my school days many years ago: "Self-reverence, self-knowledge and self-control, these three alone lead life to a sovereign power; yet not *for* power, because power of itself should come uncalled for; but to live by law, acting the law that we live by without fear, is wisdom in the scorn of consequences."

You might call this teaching Christian, Buddhistic or Vedantic, or by whatever name you like, because all would agree that for a man to be self-governed, to be a master in his own citadel, a controller of his own thought, word and action, is a paramount victory. Although we like to think of ourselves as independent beings, with the right of self-expression and freedom, we are very often carried away by impulses and emotions that cause us to do or say things that are contrary to our higher judgment. Things that betray and overthrow

us, for the time being, put us at the mercy of our lower self, rendering us utterly powerless. We are swept away on rebellious tides of inner feeling called forth by the circumstances around us, by the challenge of the moment. Again and again the onslaught of fear, anger, or some desire will force us to let down the bars. Under these influences we forget our better selves; we cease to think and thus we lose all power of discrimination.

The Bhagavad-Gita tells us this very thing — how through anger a man loses his discrimination and how through loss of discrimination he is ruined. Under the impulse of anger, we may even commit a crime, which in our rational moments, we would not dream of doing. As a little girl I witnessed something which illustrates this very well indeed. I was in a cable car with my mother; we were stopped in front of a butcher shop when our attention was drawn to a fight between two men. One of them had been knocked down by the other. I can still see his face as vividly as if it were yesterday. He was a young man, very fair, and the blood surged up right to the roots of his hair. The other man had run through the swinging doors into the shop. When the young man got up we could see violent rage on his face. He wanted to get at the one who had struck the blow, and started into the shop after him. Just then an old lady, who must have been the mother of the young lad, fell down on her knees in front of the entrance and put her arms across it pleading with him not to enter. We could see that he was torn between his desire to please her and the anger he felt as a result of the assault. He was trying to pass by the old lady, but did not wish to push her aside. Just then the cable car started and we never found out what decision he made. It is a story of

which I shall never know the end, but it left such a deep impression on me that I have not been able to forget it. In utter abandonment to his anger he may have rushed in, picked up a butcher knife and killed the assailant, yet he did not look like a bad person; he had a rather nice face. But here is a case where self-control was completely gone, where not even the slightest desire for it remained.

We may think that we want to control ourselves in all instances, more than anything else in the world. But in a moment of provocation when fear strikes at the heart, the desire to retaliate, the mob impulse or whatever it is that takes possession of us becomes most powerful; we push our better self aside and as a consequence we are led into all sorts of disaster.

Lord Buddha tells us that there is no greater enemy than our mind uncontrolled; that father nor mother, friend nor enemy—no one—can do us greater harm, even if he so desires, than our own mind. And likewise no one can be a greater friend than one's own mind.

Self-control is a basic quality which is taught to us from earliest childhood, first by our mothers and fathers, then by our schoolteachers. Later if we pursue the spiritual life, the training becomes even more rigid; for disciples in all lands must first of all learn a degree of self-control before they can advance toward God-realization. In India spiritual aspirants follow a strict course of training called yoga, which means union, and comes from the root word "to yoke." The term conveys the combining of all the forces of man, not only those of the physical body, which is merely the outer crust, but also those of the mind and emotions — all the un-

stable elements which constitute so much a part of our personality. They must be put under the control of some commanding power, something that can be relied upon, something that is never swept away into dangerous side channels. We need that which is absolute, eternal and abiding in nature, that upon which we can depend to guide our chariot aright. We know that our mind is unstable, and so are our emotions; therefore, they cannot be depended upon. It must be some final part of man's nature that is not subject to change; that, of course, is God within.

It is most difficult for us to summon this higher Self and say, "Control me!" even when we recognize and acknowledge the truth. When our tongue runs away with us, or our actions belie our profession of faith, it is not easy at that moment to transfer the control of ourselves to that other part of our being, even though we have faith in its existence.

As soon as we stop and think, we realize that there is something beyond what we ordinarily know and depend upon. The artist, the musician, all those who work under inspiration are guided by it. All who are capable of inspired, creative work cannot produce anything when they sit down "cold," as we would say. All the technical skill of a Leonardo da Vinci or a Michael Angelo cannot bestow the grandiose vision that will give rise to a masterpiece. When the artist directs his whole vision to the task, something happens, something opens up within him. The truth is that he is not really creating something; rather, he is discovering it. Certain wonderful ideas come to him in flashes; scattered thoughts gather together; the whole composes itself in his mind and he captures the complete vision from within. He infuses this into his own medium.

Every creative person goes through this process. I have talked with many of them and all say the same thing: that as they go deeper into their work the outer world more or less fades away; their thoughts and efforts become so concentrated that they often forget to eat or sleep unless reminded to do so by family or friends. Deeply immersed in their work, they go on giving more and more of themselves, until flashes of illumination become increasingly frequent; then suddenly, from the depth of their being, a wonderful inspiration springs into the mind. This is one of the ways by which man discovers the strange powers and possibilities that are hidden within him. By removing the outer layers of the mind, he allows the inner light to flood into him while the task he pursues is made practical by his outer knowledge his understanding of techniques and by his familiarity with facts that have accumulated through past experience.

Psychologists have long been investigating the human mind. They have discovered certain basic truths in regard to extrasensory perception, the subconscious and the subliminal self. However, even now, after many years of study, they can go only so far. They have found a certain something, but what lies behind that? Where do our roots go and what are we drawing from as living human beings, unless it be that final Power that sustains us at every moment of our existence? Is this not the Power by which man is able to control himself and draw his consciousness up to a higher level and thus become a witness to his own life, and, as a witness, the controller of his life? So long as we are deeply immersed in emotional and mental reactions and caught in the personal side of our life, we become the boot, as we

might say, not the person who puts on the boot. We have so identified ourselves with the emotions and thoughts of this little physical personality, that when floods of reactionary feeling come over us, how are we to extricate ourselves? How do we rise above them in order to gain control and turn the current of our life in another direction, away from some dangerous channel? The answer is, we must recognize the Being within, the One who is beyond these passing emotional states. He is above, beyond and apart from the little self with whom we are so closely involved.

Because it is most difficult for man to identify the Ruler within with his own being, he has found it convenient and helpful to place the control of himself in the keeping of some divine Figure, who exemplifies his higher perception. Man may take for his ideal Christ, who to him is godlike or God supreme, all-wise, all-powerful, all-beneficent—the embodiment of every quality that appeals to him. These are the ideals he secretly strives for, even though he fails time after time. Therefore, he takes refuge in his living Ideal, in Christ or Buddha or in any of the great ones of his choice. True, he is playing to a Power outside, but it is easier for a man in his desperation, in his sense of weakness and impotence, to control himself by imploring, "Oh Lord, do Thou control me; do Thou enter my heart and mind and give me strength." It is a sort of magic by which he unconsciously imparts the outer Divinity into his own heart and mind. How could even the greatest of Teachers deliver man from anger or fear or whatever ill it might be so long as He is outside the man's heart and mind; for is it not in this region of his being that the change does take place?

We need constantly something that can remind us of our ideal and make us aware of the unshakable Power of which we are a part. Truly we are not at the end of a long line of descent but right in the heart of God. Not only religion but science also says that all this universe is one, that there is a Power behind these laws by which we are governed. They are exactly the same laws that govern everything else in the universe: the falling of the rain, the scuttling of the little beetle through the dust, the flight of a bird, the falling of a star. That same Power is ever at work, in and through us. It governs not only our outer movements but our whole and complete being. That Power is not sitting off in some distant space; It is in everything and is made visible to us through the universe. We touch Deity; we behold Deity.

As Kabir, the poet says, "Open your eyes of love and see Him who pervades this world! Consider it well and know that this is your country." That is the spirit of the great mystics — the whole world becomes a thing of absolute wonder! Lay your hands with reverence upon everything, for it is a part of that immutable Power. There is no other Power; there can be no other; and we too are a part of It.

Ramakrishna says that if we could know that there is only one Actor, one Doer in this whole universe, we would be free in a moment. At that instant, we would be liberated from blindness, darkness and illusion. This is the great struggle. We must invoke that Power always, even in the midst of the ordinary acts of our everyday life. If we are able to do this, then the most impossible will become possible for us and what is beyond our farthest dreams will come true.

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy — by one, or more, or all of these — and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.

Know you are the Infinite, then fear must die. Say ever, "I and my Father are one."

Until you are ready to change any minute you can never see the truth; but you must hold fast and be steady in the search for truth.

The greatest sin is to think yourself weak. No one is greater; realize you are Brahman. Nothing has power except what you give it. We are beyond the sun, the stars, the universe. Teach the Godhead of man. Deny evil, create none. Stand up and say, "I am the master, the master of all." We forge the chain and we alone can break it.

The whole secret of existence is to have no fear. Never fear what will become of you, depend on no one. Only the moment you reject all help are you free.

No law can make you free, you are free. Nothing can give you freedom if you have it not already. The Atman is self-illumined. Cause and effect do not reach there, and this disembodiedness is freedom. Beyond what was, or is to be, is Brahman. As an effect, freedom would have no value: It would be a compound, and as such would contain the seeds of bondage. It is the one factor, not to be attained, but the real nature of the soul.

Everything in time, space and causation is bound. The Soul is beyond all time, all space, all causation. That which is bound is nature, not the Soul. Therefore proclaim your freedom and be what you are — ever free, ever blessed.

You are free, free, free! "Oh, blessed am I! Free am I! I am Infinite! In my soul I can find no beginning and no end. All is my Self." Say this unceasingly.

Neither seek nor avoid, take what comes. It is liberty to be affected by nothing; do not merely endure, be unattached. Remember the story of the bull. A mosquito sat long on the horn of a certain bull; then his conscience troubled him and he said: "Mr. Bull, I have been sitting here a long time, perhaps I annoy you. I am sorry, I will go away." But the bull replied: "Oh, no, not at all! Bring your whole family and live on my horn; what can you do to me?"

Those who give themselves up to the Lord do more for the world than all the so-called workers. One man who has purified himself thoroughly accomplishes more than a regiment of preachers. Out of purity and silence comes the word of power.

Go into your own room and get the Upanishads out of your Self. You are the greatest book that ever was or ever will be, the infinite depository of all that is. Until the inner teacher opens, all outside teaching is in vain. It must lead to the opening of the book of the heart to have any value.

Never forget the glory of human nature. We are the greatest God that ever was or ever will be. Christs and Buddhas are but waves on the boundless ocean which I AM.

ETHICS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

by Swami Parampanthi

Mahatma Gandhi needs no elaborate introduction in the West. Dr. Amiya Chakravarty sums up Gandhi's greatness in the following memorable words: "Mahatma Gandhi's work for peace is unique in world history. Few, in the whole history of mankind, have so effectively harnessed spiritual resources to the task of winning freedom for man. Freedom from war and freedom from hunger and disease and servitude, freedom from fear. Alone, he walked his way in the sight of the Lord; but countless millions recognized him, and in their longing for peace in a world torn by violence, followed him. Until the hour of his martyrdom, he worked for the good of all peoples. His message reached beyond India's shores and is a challenge to the goodwill of the entire human race."

The entire ethical philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi is sustained and reinforced by his own unwavering conviction that God's ambient and indefinable power pervades the whole realm of creation. Every existence, human and material, is dependent upon the existence of God. Thus, Gandhi, at the outset, envisions the total gamut of man's activities, social, political, ethical and spiritual, as one indivisible and coherent unity. It is impossible, he holds, to divide human activities and impulses, drives and aspirations of diverse types and degrees into watertight compartments in the single life of a man. Therefore, in the Gandhian philosophy of ethics, the fully integrated personality plays the pivotal role. In this connection it is equally important and pertinent to remember that, according to Gandhi, God is

the living symbol of ethics and morality — that morality and religion are essentially convertible terms. Human beings should be governed by the perennial values inherent in divine Reality rather than by the ready-made rules of expediency. To Gandhi human relationships are basically spiritual, and the ethical behavior of man is nothing but the unfoldment of the goodness inherent in humanity.

The first and foremost doctrine of his ethics is the living principle of Advaita or oneness of all creation. The whole world is a single family of God and every human being irrespective of race and creed, time and clime, is a child of God. So, Gandhi holds that all ethical approaches must ultimately be grounded in the basic concept of unity and equality of all beings. In this way he emphatically repudiates the possibility of inherited or acquired superiority in the metaphysical and absolute sense. He says ". . . my interpretation of Advaita (oneness) excludes totally any idea of superiority at any stage whatsoever. I believe implicitly that all men are born equal . . . All have the same soul as any other." There may be degrees of intellectual and physical diversities among people as regards talent and ability, aptitude and inclination. But in the unfettered domain of the soul and in the vast region of the inner reality there is no place for superiority or inferiority of any kind. Therefore, all persons are equal in the sense that all of them go to form one universal brotherhood and all have their being and reality in the selfsame eternal Reality or God. Carrying the idea to its logical conclusion, Gandhi points out that this spirit of unity must also embrace all the living and non-living things on earth.

This basically unifying approach gives rise to his

second doctrine: the ethics of universal love. Gandhi maintains that in this world two fundamental laws have been functioning since the dawn of creation: the law of "an eye for an eye" and the law of love for hate. Gandhi unconditionally subscribes to the latter because to him "to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion."

He totally refutes the concept of necessary evil, of violence as a means to establish peace, of the wrath of righteousness. He defines love thus: "That cohesive force among animate beings is love (as there is cohesive force in the realm of matter). We notice it between father and son, between brother and sister, friend and friend. But we have to learn to use that force among all that lives, and in the use of it consists our knowledge of God. Where there is love there is life; hatred leads to destruction." In other words, the spirit of non-violence (or love; he uses the two terms synonymously) which is the very foundation of the entire Gandhian philosophy provides the master key to all ethical problems of the day. Gandhi defines perfect non-violence as the complete absence of ill will against all that lives. He also thinks that a true votary of universal love cannot remain satisfied with the concept of the good of the greatest number. Rather he should perpetually struggle for the good of all and if necessary die in the endeavor. Gandhi says, "The utilitarian to be logical will never sacrifice himself. The absolutist will even sacrifice himself."

To Gandhi truth is the highest pinnacle of life and creation; truth is God. And the only way to discover truth is to approach it through the wide and deep way of universal love. The principle of love, which is be-

yond the shadow of evil and destruction, reaffirms the infinite values of creation as manifested in truth, beauty and goodness. So, it is imperative that each individual should adhere to this law of creative life that alone endows nature and life with meaningful patterns and provides human beings with a perennial and uplifting purpose. Gandhi writes, "I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction, and therefore, there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would a well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living."

The inevitable correlate of the ethics of love is the ethics of service which is the third doctrine in Gandhi's philosophy. Gandhi declares: "To serve is my religion. He unequivocally maintains that the human body and the senses, the ability and the genius, the drives and dynamics, are essentially meant for service to humanity. Therefore, human beings are to serve all with all the powers and capacities that have been given to them by God. The dedication to service, according to Gandhi, is the sole justification of human heritage, aspiration and existence. Thus the call to service is the recurrent theme of the Gandhian ethics; the welfare of all beings and things is the sole aim of all true cultures and civilizations.

The concept of service invariably involves the question of means and ends. Gandhi does not visualize any wall of separation between these two. In his philosophy means and ends are the inseparably connected terms which are two interchangeable, convertible words. Gandhi says that honorable means are essential for honorable ends. So all impure means must always be discarded.

Service is the touchstone of one's spiritual development and for the discovery of all higher values of life. For the only way to find God is to see Him in all His creatures and be one with them through the uniting highway of service. Service also reveals the deeper avenues of human wisdom. Through service the Gandhian ethics tend to show that, when explored, fundamental laws and higher facts of life will reveal each individual's pattern of responsibility in a given society. By a larger design of living through service his limited horizon of understanding would be enlarged and he would be eventually trained in the mutualities of ethical action in a community. An ethical man has the spirit of love, unwavering fidelity to truth, self-control, and the spirit of non-possession.

The ethics of service finds expression in the social sphere as the realization of equality and unity of mankind on economic, political and allied levels. It expresses itself through the dynamics of social progress, harmonizing individual freedom with social concordance. In a harmonious society the individual gladly and voluntarily adjusts himself to the need of the progressive movement of the whole. The ultimate purpose of ethics, according to Gandhi, is to enrich the individual in all fields of human attainment. It is to effect simultaneously social development and integrity through mutual cooperation and accommodation by keeping clear of licensed individualism and social totalitarianism. Gandhi holds that when we visualize every being as a significant, creative participant in an integrated, social structure, and as a part of a progressive, total universe we feel that whether an individual is good or bad is not merely his own concern but the concern of the whole

world. Gandhi observes, "Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him; if one fails, the whole world fails to that extent."

In the sphere of human aspiration and struggle, ethics faces the terrific and challenging problem of evil. Gandhi recognizes its power on earth without the slightest hesitation. He meets this challenge by upholding the overpowering creativity of universal love. Gandhi is fully convinced that the transforming power of love is the only answer to evil. It is possible to combine great love for all with the greatest opposition to evil. Evil cannot be overcome by more evil. For the compulsive resistance to it more often than not causes other evils even if the resistance is directed toward baneful things. Evil must be overcome by the suasive power of love which alone can effect a lasting redemption for fallen people. Evil is decreased in proportion as goodness is exerted and developed.

The ethics of service finds culmination in the economic sphere in what Gandhi calls "the economics of justice." True economics, he holds, never militates against the highest ethical standard just as all true ethical codes of conduct should also be based on fair economics. The Gandhian ethics envision the possibility of building a solid and sound economic structure based on universal love; an all-around development of all human beings including the weakest and the disabled. A simple remedy for the problem of relationship between employee and employer would be to give fair wages to the employee; then there would be equal distribution of the profits.

However, the spirit of Gandhian ethics is definitely against the fever of competition, the restless drive for

endless acquisition and extreme form of industrialization. The watchword of the Gandhian economics calls humanity back to the simplicity of country life, rural economy, village self-sufficiency, the development of cottage industry and handicrafts. The high light of his approach to the solution of economic problems is his concept of trusteeship of wealth and power for the welfare of humanity. He holds that those who are successful in life should be trustees of their achievements in all fields. They should utilize surplus wealth and powers for the uplift of all peoples of the world. Gandhi says, "Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealth possessed by them."

The ethics of service finds the highest expression in the political sphere through the establishment of true democracy on the basis of non-violence or universal love. Gandhi remarks, "Individual freedom can have the fullest play only under a regime of unadulterated ahimsa, non-violence." In that ideal state visualized by Gandhi everyone is his own ruler and rules himself in such a manner that he never stands in the way of the freedom of others. So, in the ideal state there is no political power or party because there is no existence of a state in the ordinary sense of the term. But this utopian condition is not yet possible though it should be the ultimate goal of all good governments; therefore, under the circumstances, Gandhi subscribes to Thoreau's definition of a good government: That government is the best that governs the least. Gandhi is against the centralization of power in government.

Lastly, Gandhi holds that the ethics of service expresses itself in a spirit of nationalism which is com-

pletely free from chauvinism and militant drive for aggression. Thus, patriotism or nationalism must be always consistent and in perfect unison with internationalism. A patriot should always remember that just as there is one God so also there is one unified human race, that service under God does not recognize any geographical frontier, that though human beings have many bodies they have essentially one underlying soul. So, Gandhi concludes, "My religion and my patriotism derived from my religion embrace all life. I want to realize identity not merely with beings called human, but I want to realize identity with all life . . . because we claim descent from the same God and that being so, all life in whatever form it appears must be essentially one."

INDIA AT A GLANCE

(from letters of Fred Swain)

Calcutta, June 9, 1958

Dear A*:

Thank you for your interesting letter which reached me yesterday in Calcutta. You ask me to tell you of my impressions of India from my own point of view. You speak of it as if it were something strange that I have imported from America. This is not the case. The only point of view I have, I adopted from India. It is the traditional Hindu idea which has been taught by India's rishis, saints and sages for many thousands of years. This in effect says that the first duty of man is to seek God, or the Atman, that this search is the primary purpose of life, that no lasting peace can be had if we turn away from it. India teaches that the best way to find God is by renunciation of worldly desires and

*An Indian friend.

devotion to the supreme ideal. This is the only viewpoint I have, and whatever impression I may give of India is in the light of her own teaching.

Unfortunately today many of the westernized, educated intellectuals, who are so confident that they will provide the leadership for modern India, have lost contact with their own culture and religion. Most of these modern intellectuals look upon Hinduism as an instrument of superstition and ignorance, an obstacle to progress. It is true that many social customs are a hindrance. However this has not been an outgrowth of Hinduism.

For some reason a synthesis between East and West is seldom achieved in India. When Indian students enter the Western classroom, respect for their own religion is soon shattered by the modern scientific approach, and by the material prosperity they observe in the West. Unfortunately many of them never knew much of their own religion in the first place. Hinduism is not taught in any of the schools in India today. It is rather difficult for the average Indian to learn much of the sublime philosophy and lofty ideals of Hinduism, because there are not many people or schools available to teach these things. Therefore, when they come in contact with the glittering materialism of the West, these misguided Indians believe they have found the answer to India's problems. Believing that material progress is the sole answer, they soon become absorbed in materialistic pursuits, which lead them unsuspectingly to personal ambition, selfishness, desire for wealth and loss of idealism.

These Indians cannot lead their country out of its misery and its multitude of social and economic prob-

lems. Though these intellectuals form a powerful group in India and have come to hold many high government posts, as well as other important positions, it may be said they are really men without a country. Most of them belong neither to India nor to the West. They have lost touch with their own people and they have lost their own souls in the process. Glibly talking about what they will do for India, they in reality lead India toward moral chaos, graft and corruption.

Fortunately these westernized Indians will never really have the support of the Indian people. The masses, illiterate and poverty stricken, have not in any sense given up their religion. Long-suffering and patient, they cling to the ideals of their ancestors. These ideals are all they have left after hundreds of years of invasions and foreign exploitation. Instinctively they sense the significance of Hinduism and absorb the philosophy of the Gita and Upanishads. Their oral readers and their Indian music play no small part in their fervor. It seems to me these people carry the true spirit of India. No man or group of men will ever have the wholehearted support of the Indian masses, unless they are in tune with the principles and philosophy of Hinduism.

I feel the real leadership will come from among the hundreds of thousands of sannyasins and sadhus (holy men) scattered throughout India, who are the traditional source of India's great leaders. These are the only men who ever commanded the full respect of the masses. Indians understand sadhus and the principles of renunciation by which they live.

Today the sadhus are highly criticized by the westernized Indians. They are spoken of as parasites who

weigh down the Indian economy. These Indians, generally atheistic, with no spiritual understanding, accuse the sadhus of laziness, insincerity, and of perpetrating a fraud. This is far from the truth. Few would be able to follow Indian sadhus that I have seen, for they live a life of great privation and hardship. From my experience, I have found the vast majority I meet to be true and sincere seekers of God, deeply religious by nature, and wholly absorbed in their spiritual practice. But for those people who are not sympathetic, or who do not understand this way of life, it is natural they would see it otherwise. Yet this life of religious renunciation is the life and breath of India. Anyone who cannot understand it cannot understand India.

A distinction should be made between the sadhus and the brahmins. The brahmins are professional priests and perform a social function. They are householders with families to maintain and some are very worldly men. They do not represent the highest ideal which is exemplified in the sannyasin and sadhu renunciates. Many of the brahmins are mercenary and commercially minded. This is easily verified at all the Hindu temples where they squeeze every possible anna out of the pilgrims.

But the mendicant sadhus and sannyasins belong to another class entirely. Having no possessions or family, sleeping on the ground under the sky, devoting all their time to spiritual practice, they have need of only a piece of cloth, and a small amount of food which may or may not come their way. These men really have no self-interest, and because of this, they are understood and revered by the majority of Indians. It may be that some fall short of the mark, as men do in all endeavors, but

from their ranks have come the great teachers and moral leaders of India. It is by these sadhus that the great changes have been and will be brought about. They are the life breath of Hinduism.

There are many leaders among the sadhus today who have a profound effect on India. Perhaps through them India will someday fully return to the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and his predecessors. India can then take her rightful place as a moral leader of the world and offer her real spiritual contribution which is truly what the world needs.

It is easy of course to decide what is best and what others should do. India will go her own way, whatever I or anyone may think. Obviously opinions have no value. India has her God-controlled destiny, and God is quite capable of running His affairs without any advice from me. We small human beings often think we can do so much, that we know so much, but we see only a small fragment of the total pattern. Who really knows what is best? Knowingly or unknowingly, all we can do is fulfill the part we are destined to play in the great pattern which the Lord has drawn. Therefore I suggest you discount what I have said in this letter and file it in the waste basket.

With best wishes, *Jai Ma!* —Fred

Cleanse the mind, this is all of religion. Get rid of the defects within yourself and you will not be able to see any without. When once you are free and stainless, you see only freedom and purity in the world around. That moment all the knots of the heart are cut asunder, all crooked places are made straight and this world vanishes as a dream. —Swami Vivekananda

FROM AN INDIAN JOURNEY

by Astrid Setterwall Angstrom

I take refuge in the self-existent Being in whom the universe rests, from whom it has sprung, by whom it has been brought into being, who Himself constitutes it, and who is at the same time distinct from both cause and effect. —Srimad Bhagavatam

It is an early morning in January. The sun penetrates faintly through haze. The colors are so thin that the river and sky merge far away in formless gold. The oarsmen slowly steer our green houseboat. We move forward in the embrace of Mother Ganges and observe from here life on the shore. This is Kasi, which we know by the name of Benares. In the scriptures it is mentioned as the golden city. Here the cupola of Siva's temple shines in pure gold. When Greek culture was taking form, Benares was already sending out her gold brocaded textiles to the wealthy cities of her land.

This town that we see, sloping toward the water, is only a shadow of the real Kasi. For uncountable centuries pilgrims have come here to purify themselves in the water of the Ganga. Here many have attained realization of the highest Reality. Buddha, Shankaracharya, Sri Ramakrishna and others among India's great personalities have stayed here for long or short periods. The legend says that another river, the hidden Sarasvati, flows by Benares before it joins with the Ganges and the Jumna at Allahabad. Its source is in the Himalayas, but it runs in the open for only a short stretch, then disappears under ground. Sarasvati is the name of the goddess of wisdom. The river that carries her name is perhaps only a symbol — but as such, real

enough—of the hidden spiritual life that flows through India. This deep, fluent current of devotion and God-consciousness under the surface of everyday life is the real Kasi which we sense in the stillness of this luminous morning.

Benares is the city of the great god Siva. Sakti — the Divine Power — his spouse, is known here as Annapurna. *Anna* means food. *Purna* means fullness, perfection. In her name the pilgrims are fed. Annapurna gives man knowledge of his divine nature. People believe that she grants illumination to those who die with their feet in the waters of the holy river. Many old and tired folks therefore come here to pass their last days.

The pilgrims on the shore perform their morning ablutions: They chew a stick of the Neem tree, brush their teeth with it and then throw it away; they prostrate before the river which has its rise in the white snows of the Himalayas. Its water is so pure that it can be kept for years; smallpox and cholera bacteria can live in it for only a few hours. Along these shores Indian culture has grown through the centuries. Men and women stand in the river bringing their hands together in reverent greeting. Others offer garlands of white jasmines and yellow tagetis. They submerge in the water so that it covers their heads, each saying his mantra or prayer: "Goddess Ganga, pour thy grace upon me; Goddess Ganga, give me more love," or, "Goddess Ganga, purify me!" The flowers, little dots of sparkling color, are gently pushed to the shore by the waves.

Brahmins sit under bamboo shades reading the scriptures; or, letting the beads of rosaries glide through their fingers, they repeat their mantras. The sound of a

temple gong reaches us through the mist. And a subtler jingle as from small bells is also heard. What is that? A man runs along the shore from ghat to ghat; again and again he chants the name of God while he rings his bells. He creates a bewildering impression. But in India one must never be hasty to judge, for strange appearances may embody deep experiences.

* * *

There is a throng of people at Dasasvamedh Ghat — women in red, yellow, violet and emerald-green saris, men in white dhotis and with bare bodies. A train of pilgrims is slowly moving toward the river. They wear no colorful garments. They are a pale, grey mass of humanity carrying their beggar-bowls.

A sadhu, with the signs of Vishnu painted on his forehead, is sitting in a house that opens onto the passage leading to the ghat. He is an old man with long hair and a beard; his body is smeared with ashes. Through the door behind him a picture of his teacher is visible. In front of him is a book which he is reading. Morning after morning I see him there, unmoving, only turning a leaf of his book now and then. Nothing seems to disturb him.

Below him the moving, shifting life goes on. Barbers shave the heads of the pilgrims before they bathe; sweets and food are sold. Goods are displayed on the broad steps leading to the Ganges—glass beads, glittering stones, jugs made of clay and of brass . . .

Now something happens. Men, women and children among the pilgrims are squatting on the ground reaching their bowls out to the servant of a rich man who serves rice from big pots. One man thinks he has received less than another. He rushes up and demands

more in a loud, accusing voice. Others contradict him. The fight is soon in full swing. They lie on top of one another; they crouch and try to protect what they already have, but in vain! The rice is spilled on the ground. The servant tries to portion out the food as justly as he can. But it is not an easy task because the men press themselves close to him and pull at his garments. In order to hurry he digs deeply into the pot with his spoon and throws the rice at them as if they were dogs. There is not much left for those who do not push themselves forward but instead remain quietly waiting. Among them is a woman with a tiny baby. She reaches her bowl toward the man and expectantly turns her big brown velvet eyes on him. She is only a child herself. She receives so little in her bowl when he sweeps past her! I see her disappointed face. I hear her sigh — her patient sigh. She is used to living on the border of starvation.

And the sadhu who sits just above the place where all this happens only turns a new leaf in his book.

Beggars throw themselves on us: "Give *bakhsis*. I am a holy man." Charlatans and wise men mingle. Poverty and need crawl at the feet of the palaces that stand on the river bank. The grey-white cows walk solemnly in the middle of all this diversity. Half-grown children keep near them and try to catch their dung before it has reached the ground. They form it into cakes which they plaster onto the palace walls to dry in the sun. These they sell for fuel. The opposite parts of the drama of life are enacted here at the ghat.

Not far from here is Manikarnika Ghat, the cremation ground. Four or five pyres are already built. A corpse of a man wrapped in white is lying with its feet

in the holy water. Female bodies in red wrappings await their turn. The cows walk around undisturbed even there, and boys fly their kites nearby. Life goes on as always. Death is not looked upon as something frightening; the purifying fire burns to ashes the bodies that have done their service. Ganges brings the ashes to the sea. On this golden morning who could doubt that those who died have found illumination in their last moment!

* * *

In the afternoon the temples and the bathing places lie in shadow, but the river still maintains its golden gleam. This is the hour when the brahmins sit on wooden balconies that hang out over the Ganges, reading and commenting on the scriptures. A Bengali priest chants from the Upanishads. Some steps higher up sadhus sit quietly in deep concentration at the feet of images. Their brass vessels filled with water stand by their side.

We search for our friend who is known as Krishnaswami, and we find him under a bamboo shade with the holy scripture, Srimad Bhagavatam, on his knees. He is surrounded by a group that is joined by more and more listeners as he goes on talking. We sit down among them. Though we do not understand the words, we breathe in the atmosphere. Who are those sitting in this group? Elderly people, middle-aged men and women on their way from work, and young boys. Noiseless children play around all the time without disturbing anyone.

Krishnaswami has a ringing voice. He chants the text in Sanskrit and comments on it in Bengali. Both languages have a rhythmic, musical sound. It is easier to keep the mind concentrated here than anywhere else.

It seems to direct itself without much effort towards the inner Reality. As I sit here listening to the chanting voice, the words from Brihadaranyaka Upanishad rise within me:

From the unreal lead me to the Real,
From darkness lead me to light,
From death lead me to immortality.

These words express the Hindu mind. Nothing is more important than the experience of That which cannot be divided, That which does not perish. Is it worthwhile to seek anything else? To find this Reality men and women leave their homes, their goods and society and enter into solitude.

Fascinated, my eyes follow an almost naked man running down the steps to the river to fill his jug with water, and up again to pour it over the feet of gods and goddesses. The radiance of his face touches me; and he is not even aware of me. To him the images are not just images; they are real forms that cover the Essential. In Kasi many different methods and ways are practiced, all leading to the same goal.

From far away the tinkling of a bell reaches us again. Every day at this hour a half-naked man sits on his board ringing his bell and shouting with his hoarse, broken voice, "Sita-Ram! Sita-Ram!"

* * *

Krishnaswami is an elderly man. Behind big glasses his eyes smile goodness and wisdom. He studied law in Oxford and became a prominent lawyer with a good income. But he was never interested in a worldly life in the ordinary sense. One day he threw his possessions into the Ganges and began to study the old scriptures

of his people in their original language. Mostly he read Srimad Bhagavatam and the Upanishads. He became absorbed in their mighty words and for him the world ceased to exist. One afternoon — perhaps fifteen years ago — he sat on this same seat where he now sits every afternoon between four and five and became merged in what he was reading. When he came back to ordinary consciousness he found people around him, listening. Without knowing, he had been reading and speaking aloud. Since then he has explained the scriptures every day by the Ganges.

We meet him one morning as we stroll about in the golden town. He says he would like to show us Kasi. He invites us to come with him to a rich merchant who has retired in order to devote himself to the study of philosophy and the search for Reality. Some friends assemble on this man's veranda to talk of Brahman. According to the Indian way of dividing human life into four stages, they have all reached the third stage — when a man should withdraw to solitude for contemplation and meditation. The visitors who do not know English remain silent, absorbed in themselves; others talk about Brahman and ways and means to realize It. They are eloquent because they consider nothing else important. Krishnaswami in his red wrapper listens in silence. The veranda lies in half-shadow. Geraniums and tagetis illuminate the garden.

One says, "Brahman or the Ultraconscious is not a state. It is beyond the powers of conception, beyond all states. Brahman is! This All-life is not static but dynamic."

These men are seized by the desire to make the essential ideas clear to us. With eager reverence they

quote the scriptures, and their words float along in the crisp morning air. How enchanting! Krishnaswami wanted to show us Kasi. This is Kasi — where the talk of Brahman rises from the low verandas!

* * *

In the afternoon we join again the group on the shore. Krishnaswami continues his lessons from Srimad Bhagavatam. Now and then he translates into English for our benefit. The members of the group smile to us, happy that we also may partake of this wisdom.

"This is the continuation of the talk of the morning," he says. "It depends on divine grace that a human being can be united with the Oversoul or the Ultraconscious. In Bhagavatam, Sri Krishna is this Ultraconscious, this great Self. Krishna is Bliss itself. In the highest bhakti, divine love, there is no function of the senses. But still it is said that there are unlimited states even there. This knowledge will manifest itself when the time is ripe — through grace."

Those who listen do not stir. They drink his words in deep silence. By such attentive hearing culture has developed along the Ganges through thousands of years.

When the talk is over the listeners salute Krishnaswami by touching the ground with their foreheads and taking the dust off his feet. They put a few annas before him. That is all the steady income he has, but it is sufficient for his few needs.

* * *

Pushing through the throng of people in the narrow alleys I am suddenly aware of the gaze of someone. I turn around and meet a pair of eyes that become the glowing center of the lively picture. I see a tall man

with a refined face standing in the open door of a small store. Who is he? What strange eyes! Krishnaswami says, "He is my friend, a highly evolved man. As I do not take any disciples, I turn those who come to me for discipleship over to him."

In a small house we climb dark narrow stairs that lead to a terrace onto which opens the room that Krishnaswami occupies. It is a small, bare room. A bedstead of plaited ropes stands folded up against a wall. On the floor are some brass vessels. The shelves that are dug in the adobe walls are full of books — big, heavy, battered and much read volumes. There are two chairs beside each other and another one facing them: All is prepared for our reception.

Krishnaswami does not exaggerate. He talks of nothing other than what he has directly experienced. His manner is short and a little brusque — as if he is afraid of saying too much. He emphasizes that he has never been interested in life in the world because he never had a mother whose love tied him to it. She died when he was born. When he reads the scriptures in the language in which they were written he finds their words so powerful that he is raised to another plane of consciousness. Again and again he comes back to this. There is no need for any other teaching; the scriptures contain all. By preference he merges himself in the Upanishads.

In his presence one has a strong feeling of having come together with a perfectly honest being. Every word uttered by this man who cannot speak anything but the truth is potent. But behind his restricted talk one senses also a great tenderness.

Before dark we mount another stair leading to a

roof-terrace. Far away the Ganges, still reflecting the last rays of the sun, appears like a streak of molten gold. Under the starlit sky, since ancient times, thinkers, seekers, lovers of God have passed their nights on Benares' roofs. And at dawn they have chanted their praise to the Unlimited and repeated the names of God. This persistent life of the spirit envelops one in Kasi, directing him toward his inner Self.

Krishnaswami says, "I walked thousands of miles in India, but here I remained. I found Kasi to be the best place to concentrate on the scriptures."

Over the great city
Where the wind rushes through the parks and gardens,
In the air, the high clouds brooding,
In the lines of street perspective, the lamps, the traffic,
The pavements and the innumerable feet upon them,
I AM: *make no mistake—do not be deluded.*
Think not because I do not appear at first glance—because the centuries have gone by and there is no assured tidings of me that therefore I am not there.
Think not because all goes its own way that therefore I do not go my own way through all.
The fixed bent of hurrying faces in the street — each turned toward its own light, seeing no other — yet I am the Light toward which they all look.
The toil of so many hands toward so many multifarious ends, yet my hands know the touch and twining of them all.
All come to me at last.
There is no love like mine;
For all other love takes one and not another;
And other love is pain, but this is joy eternal.

—EDWARD CARPENTER

SELF IS A SEA

(from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran)

And a man said, Speak to us of Self-knowledge.

And he answered, saying:

Your hearts know in silence the secrets of the days and nights.

But your ears thirst for the sound of your heart's knowledge.

You would know in words that which you have always known in thought.

You would touch with your fingers the naked body of your dreams.

And it is well you should.

The hidden well-spring of your soul must needs rise and run murmuring to the sea;

And the treasure of your infinite depths would be revealed to your eyes.

But let there be no scales to weigh your unknown treasure;

And seek not the depths of your knowledge with staff or sounding line.

For the self is a sea boundless and measureless.

Say not, "I have found the truth," but rather, "I have found a truth."

Say not, "I have found the path of the soul." Say rather, "I have met the soul walking upon my path."

For the soul walks upon all paths.

The soul walks not upon a line, neither does it grow like a reed.

The soul unfolds itself, like a lotus of countless petals.

THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD

by Darrell Miya

The worship of God as Mother of the universe, rather than Father of the universe, is little understood in the West. In the Christian faith the masculine aspect predominates and the Godhead is worshipped as the Heavenly Father. The Catholic religion, of course, has its Holy Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, and yet the followers of that faith accept Jesus as the dominant figure.

Hinduism, perhaps more than any other faith, has come to recognize the feminine aspect of deity. It states that there is the Unconditioned Absolute, and that the first manifestation of that Absolute is the Mother, who is considered the primal energy and power of God. It is from the womb of the Mother that the whole of creation comes. Needless to say, there are those in India who worship the masculine aspect, but one of the most popular symbols of deity in that land of religions is the Divine Mother.

The average Christian simply accepts the Godhead as being masculine, the Father. This poses the question: How can creation come forth from the Father alone? In the Father is the seed, the idea, but there must be some medium in which the seed can be planted; otherwise it cannot manifest. From this results the concept of the Father-Mother God.

Christianity, as far as the layman is concerned, has placed the Father first, the argument being that first there must be the seed or idea. Secondly, comes the Mother in whom the seed is placed. Then from the womb of the Mother comes forth the whole of nature

or creation. Making the Father primary can be one of the basic factors which has contributed to the suppression and subjugation of womanhood, the Mother being considered secondary and thus inferior to man.

This erroneous acceptance of woman as inferior to man can be corrected if and when mankind understands that the beginning was not the Father but the Unconditioned, the Infinite, the Absolute, which is beyond sex, beyond all limitations, beyond any definitions which the mind can conceive. It is the Great Mystery. It is what the Hindus simply refer to as "That." From that Infinite Absolute came forth the Father-Mother principle, and it was through the interaction of the Father-Mother principle that creation came forth.

From the above concept we must conclude that the Father is not superior to the Mother, nor is the Mother superior to the Father. They are complementary. The society which worships the Mother aspect of the Godhead will elevate women to the same level as men. Women will be recognized as coequals and copartners with men in this great adventure of life. The worship of the feminine aspect of deity produces great spirituality but does not lead to material prosperity. When India was at her height, the worship of the Divine Mother found the women of that nation being given full and equal recognition with men. Woman, in her sphere or area of action, reigned supreme. Some of the great sages and seers of that time came from the ranks of women.

India, however, has been in a steady decline for the past seven or eight hundred years and, as deterioration sets in, we find woman being subjugated. This subjugation of Indian womanhood was due to the degeneration of very high ideals and concepts. Instead of carry-

ing out these ideals on the level of consciousness the declining society attempted to institute them on the physical level, such as the burning of the widow on the funeral pyre of the husband.

In the West, where God is recognized as the Father, we find tremendous material prosperity but a sad lack of spiritual integrity. The physical sciences predominate. Technology is outstripping our spiritual and moral fibre. So much so, that unless our spiritual development is activated, our technical sciences may turn and rend us.

Furthermore, the restriction of the Godhead to the masculine aspect leads to woman's being considered as definitely inferior to man. Not until the feminine principle of the Godhead is recognized as coexistent with the masculine principle, will woman be given her full status as complementary to, and not inferior to, the male.

It is very difficult for the male to accept this equality. He bases his superiority upon two factors: first, upon his physical strength which is unquestionably superior to that of woman; and second, upon his mental capacities which seem to excel hers in reasoning and analytical powers. He fails to recognize the fact that woman complements his physical strength with her soul-strength and his mental capabilities with her psychic and intuitive faculties.

One of the basic reasons for today's rapidly rising divorce rate is man's inability to perceive the above-mentioned equation. He is like a bird with one wing, floundering around under an age-old misconception and completely ignoring the fact that his partner in marriage is the other half of the balance.

Woman, with her infinite patience, her capacity to

suffer and endure long, her boundless compassion and love, her power to sustain and nurture, does her work silently and in secret.

Man must come to see this. Since she does her work in secret he must reward her openly. He must give her full and complete recognition as a copartner. When woman gains this she will give up the attempt to compete with man in his field. This does not mean that there will not be women who will develop both the masculine and feminine principles within themselves — the qualities of both mind and heart. Such women are quite capable of working with men and of taking their place in world affairs. But it does mean that married women, as a whole, will be content to play the part for which life has cast them, and will make the home and the well-being of children during their childhood the first concern.

Out from the Godhead stream two lines of force, one called Man, one called Woman. Shall we exalt one above the other? If so, then God would appear unbalanced. An unbalanced Godhead would mean an unbalanced universe, and unbalanced society. Too much emphasis on the masculine leads to extreme materialism, lust for power, aggression and war. Overemphasis on the feminine leads to loss of manhood, to weakness, invasion and slavery. To establish and maintain the balance becomes the mutual responsibility of both male and female members of society.

Prayer and meditation will teach us much that we cannot learn in any other way. If we cannot find God, it is perhaps because He is at home, while we are abroad; He is ready for us, while we are too busy to attend to Him. —W. R. Inge

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

VEDANTA CENTRE, COHASSET AND BOSTON, MASS.

Summer arrived at our eastern headquarters in a floodtide of activities. Srimati Gayatri Devi returned from California in time to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Vedanta Centre in Boston. On Saturday, June the twentieth, the celebration began at the Ashrama in Cohasset with special worship, meditation and the keeping of vigil by the resident community and invited devotees. The public observance took place next morning in the city at the Vedanta Chapel. The eleven o'clock service was attended by an overflowing, enthusiastic congregation. Srimati Gayatri Devi spoke on: "Man of Vision," portraying a vivid word picture of Swami Paramananda, the inspired founder, whose pioneering and tireless services have made the Vedanta Centre a live unit of spirituality in Boston over the long years. The celebration continued until the next Sunday, June the twenty-eighth. In spite of the rain, many came to the Service. Srimati Gayatri Devi spoke on: "India Serves the West." Grace Huntress, who has been associated with the Vedanta Centre for more than twenty-five years, was the first guest speaker. She was followed by David Grindell. Brother Richard Creesy read aloud a letter of appreciation from Dorothy Hanson, who was unable to come from New Hampshire. A telegram from a devotee, formerly of Frankfurt, Germany, read: "During the fiftieth anniversary of the Vedanta Centre, my thoughts abide with its consecrated workers and supporters who devote their life to the great task of disseminating truth among the peoples of the world. May the Universal Spirit per-

petrate the sacred work of this venerable Centre."

Following their long established tradition, the Ashrama residents observed the Fourth of July in the usual manner by a three-hour period of silence and special services. This was in remembrance of the liberation of Swamis Vivekananda and Paramananda. Sunday, the fifth, brought together many devotees and friends for the first out-of-doors public services in Cohasset. The weather was quite perfect and the Nature's Sanctuary under the pines an ideal setting for worship. A Hindu dinner was prepared by the experienced hands of Sryukta Charuprava Devi with much loving care, and served to more than sixty appreciative guests and resident members.

On Sunday evening, July the sixteenth, Gayatri Devi spoke before the Metaphysical Club of Boston on "Power of Silence."

Some of the subjects of the Sunday services have been "Who am I?", "Progress Toward God," "They Shall See God," "The Living Presence," "Peace and Peacemakers," and "Action and Contemplation."

The thirtieth anniversary of the founding of Ananda Ashrama in Cohasset was observed on August the sixteenth. At the eleven o'clock service several members of the congregation were invited to offer greetings. A Hindu dinner was a special part of the day's program. As this fell on the date of Sri Ramakrishna's *mahasamadhi,* the previous day was dedicated to his memory. It was spent in spiritual preparation.

The focus of interest in Cohasset at present is the new temple, which is slowly but steadily progressing. The untiring, consecrated and skilled service of Brother Richard, who is in charge of the entire construction,

mingles with the labor of appointed men from the outside in day-to-day activities. It is most inspiring to watch Sol Ginsberg, Roy Houghton, Alexander Rosenwald, Dr. William Huntress, fourteen-year-old David Rodman, all non-resident members of the Ashrama, and even the young women, lending their share in the fulfillment of this dream. Tentative plans are being made for the dedication services. It is hoped that they can be held on Sunday, October the fourth.

A bazaar was held on Saturday, August twenty-second, for the benefit of the new temple. The full cooperation and efforts of the Centre's many friends were responsible for the success of the bazaar.

ANANDA ASHRAMA, LA CRESCENTA, CALIFORNIA

Enthusiastic reports travel from the western center to the east about the vitality of our work in California. Swami Parampanthi, the young monk from India, has been in charge of all public services and classes since the middle of June. He has delivered enlightening addresses on Sundays and stimulating scholarly interpretations of the Upanishads on Thursday evenings. Recently, he has been conducting a discussion group after lunch at the Ashrama guest house, on Sunday afternoons. The following have been the subjects of some of Swami Parampanthi's talks: "Some Basic Steps to Spiritual Living," "The Doctrine of Maya," and "Karma and Reincarnation."

On the twenty-first of June the liberation of the Ashrama's founder, Swami Paramananda, was observed; and Swami Parampanthi spoke on Swami Vivekananda on June twenty-eighth in memory of that great soul's passing. Speaking on Sri Ramakrishna on August sixteenth, he began a series of Sunday talks on the various world saviors and prophets.